

SENATE SURVEY OF FACULTY OPINIONS 1998 Results

VG = Very Good
G = Good
N = Neutral
P = Poor
VP = Very Poor

My personal impression:		VG	G	N	P	VP	NA	Count	Mean	Deviation
1.	faculty morale is	3%	34%	33%	24%	5%	1	202	3.05	0.96
2.	the Senate's focus (i.e., choice of issues) is	9%	53%	27%	7%	4%	9	202	3.56	0.90
3.	the Senate's performance in communicating faculty concerns to the University administration is	15%	47%	28%	4%	6%	6	202	3.62	0.98
4.	the faculty regents performance in representing faculty concerns to the Board of Regents is	23%	47%	19%	9%	2%	9	202	3.80	0.96
In My View:										
5.	the expectation that a faculty member must be proficient in all professional areas (teaching, research, and service) is	12%	34%	10%	31%	12%	1	202	3.03	1.28
6.	a system that distributes salary increases based primarily on merit is	22%	43%	15%	15%	6%	2	202	3.58	1.16
7.	the latitude for faculty to influence decision-making is	3%	19%	25%	33%	20%	4	202	2.51	1.09
In my opinion:										
8.	the University's governance system is	2%	26%	33%	26%	13%	4	202	2.76	1.02
9.	the University's spending priorities are	2%	14%	27%	41%	16%	5	202	2.45	0.97
10.	the University's administrative responsiveness to faculty concerns is	2%	15%	35%	32%	16%	4	202	2.53	0.98
I rate:										
11.	the University President's job performance as	10%	36%	47%	6%	2%	24	202	3.46	0.81
12.	the University Provost's job performance as	10%	34%	30%	14%	12%	7	202	3.16	1.15
13.	my Dean's job performance as	24%	34%	18%	15%	10%	2	202	3.49	1.26
14.	my Department Head's job performance as	38%	25%	13%	15%	9%	2	202	3.68	1.35
15.	my working conditions as	13%	43%	25%	13%	7%	2	202	3.42	1.08
16.	my job satisfaction as	20%	44%	21%	11%	4%	1	202	3.65	1.04
17.	my working relations with other faculty as	42%	51%	4%	1%	1%	1	202	4.32	0.71

NOTE:

The percentage values do NOT include the number of answers in the NA column.

Dev(N) used the following formula: $\sqrt{\text{sum}(\text{sqr}(x - \text{mean})) / N}$ where N is the total number of data points. (In this case, N is the number of valid answers which are NOT equal to no answer.)

SENATE SURVEY OF FACULTY OPINIONS

1998

COMMENTS

1. I have lost all confidence in the Faculty Senate. It no longer appears to support faculty concerns and instead seems to provide an arena for personal gain.

Issues I feel strongly about are being addressed unadvisedly in my opinion. For example, faculty evaluations by students are out of hand and counter-productive to good educational strategy. A full professor is evaluated by freshmen just out of high school? This encourages weakening of course content and assignments and a general lowering of the educational value of the courses offered. I know for a fact. It also contributes to the very low morale amongst WKU faculty. I say that with a 4.5 average - not a personal vendetta.

What effort has been made by the Senate to improve the physical environment? No faculty dining room, not even a faculty coffee house anymore. The faculty have been fragmented and isolated from one another. No faculty club. No nothing.

The original goals for the Faculty Senate seem to have faded into oblivion. Poor leadership.

2. Too soon to evaluate Ransdell

Faculty regent is the best we've had in my 18 yrs at WKU, issue-oriented, data-driven, well prepared and above all, tenacious

3. I need a power computer in my office to do my job. I have requested and begged and still have insufficient computer power.

4. In regard to the statement #5 I wish to add that it think it is unrealistic to think that a faculty member would be equally competent in each area. Each person is blessed - or cursed with individual talents and experiences which may contribute to excellence in one area over another. Of the three areas mentioned I consider teaching the most important to WKU faculty.

5. With regard to #5- if only that concept were more than lip service. This university has more dead wood than a furniture factory.

With regard to #6, I am continuously disappointed by the "good ole boy system" and "cronies" that seems to guide salary increases in quite a few departments. Take a good look around, the raises go to friends and by "habit" more than by inspection or individual productivity. There is significant gender bias.

The President has not been here long enough for me to form an opinion of his outward action whatever his motivations are.

I am still waiting for the opportunity to evaluate our departments head's performance. It's been six years, maybe seven since the last time.

6. What keeps my morale up? (1) a small number of really good students (2) A congenial capable faculty

7. Our facilities are falling apart!!!

8. #15. Poor computer programs and hardware, lack of technological equipment- video equipment-microphones for counseling rooms, poor support for off-campus teaching - traveling, transporting equipment, reimbursement

9. #8 Admin. is overloaded with personnel and is understaffed on intra-admin. communication

10. In recent years, the Faculty Senate has lost all credibility for me. Instead of concentrating on fair representation of all sides, its "study" of university ethics practices and policies appeared to me as nothing more than a thinly veiled attempt to pursue personal animosities and engage the wider university in private vendettas. All of this, of course, was "posed" as an open invitation to debate abstract issues.

In short, the Faculty Senate certainly has not represented my perspective on any issue of importance in recent years. To the contrary, it appears foolish, ill-formed and, often, a personal forum for private, aggressive, and destructive personal agendas.

11. As a professor of 30+ years tenure I am very concerned about my salary versus faculty of the same rank at other institutions. We are not getting the promised "boost as retirement nears" salary increases - will there be an incentive to encourage retirement - or is this it?

12. The teaching load at WKU. And the consequent low level of significant basic research that is possible, effectively convert WKU to the level of a junior college or secondary level school. Faculty and administrators should take serious steps to reduce the teaching load, at least to 3/3, and to insure that genuine, nationally-recognized research goes on at WKU by the faculty.

No faculty person should be either promoted or granted tenure without a reasonably strong showing in scholarly activity and research.

13. I feel lucky to have our department head as my supervisor. He does a great job.

14. To date, Pres. Ransdell has shown a willingness to listen to faculty concerns, a significant improvement over the past decade. His determination to place decision-making authority into the hands of those responsible, ending micro-managing from the president's office, is an improvement. Finally, Western should bite the bullet and begin spending a significantly larger proportion of its budget for instruction, or simply abandon our shaky quest to become a leading educational institution.

15. Regarding #5, If we are expected to be proficient in all professional areas, we must be given the time and resources to succeed in those areas. It seems that the longer I'm here at Western, the more I'm expected to do more with less. This has had a negative effect on my morale, and I believe it has affected my colleagues as well.

16. I truly have enjoyed my first two years here at WKU. The physical plant condition of the TCNW bldg is such that it makes doing my job very difficult. The almost complete lack of climate control, leaky pipes etc. make carrying out biological research very difficult.

17. The Senate minimizes the value of faculty excellence and their responsibilities to the

University. Society deserves more!

18. With regard to #5, expectations in areas other than teaching seem to ignore the significant demand, placed on teaching a four-course load.

19. The problem with merit increases is that the performance appraisal instrument is too vague. You have merit if you are liked; otherwise, you have no merit.

20. New faculty but impressed so far!

21. Our department head is not available to faculty. It seems that faculty needs/concerns are not prioritized. She spends more time out of the office and out of the state than on the job as department head. Faculty morale is low due to (at least partially) lack of leadership.

22. The Fischer report says it all and it's all too true.

23. Our department program is dying at the Masters level due to raising of standards and we were identified as top Master's program in the state by the Political Committee.

We are a regional institution and not the "Harvard" of the South.

24. This school does not equitably foster and support excellence in all departments

25. We are asked to do more with less resources. Class sizes keep getting larger. My smallest section this semester has 39 students.

26. I think faculty morale is amazingly good considering all the barriers that are placed in the way of their accomplishing anything and the lack of support (financial!) for faculty development.

27. University budget spending lacks sufficient attempts to academic/instructional resources- keeps decreasing as % of budget. Let's get our mission straight.

28. #2 What for God's sake, are you doing? I don't hear of anything. Certainly on the matter of our health insurance. You should be taking a major part in the decisions. I, for one, do not feel safe with health insurance underwritten by the University.

29. I do not feel that our working conditions or my job satisfaction is as good or higher as it once was. The main reason is that the administration does not seem to value the faculty or be responsive to our concerns.

I applaud the Faculty Senate's recent reports and recommendations concerning two issues that affect faculty in basic ways - health insurance premiums and summer stipends. I would like to see the senate do more studies of this nature. Also, in view of the administrator's attitude toward faculty, I would like to see a Senate with more clout. Efforts to see the faculty more organized and encourage them to be more vocal about their concerns would be highly appreciated.

30. These comments do appear negative. I am sorry for that. However, my working conditions are restricted beyond the limits of endurance. We are being asked to do more and more with less support. Between my advisory load, teaching load, and expected community and research activities, I exceed 60-70 hrs per week. My rewards aren't. I don't even have access to the WKU net system from either my office or home.

The physical plant is in need of much work. The increases in health care insurance is staggering - the information concerning the university contributions when compared to Benchmark was astonishing and disappointing. WKU must develop equity with Benchmark in order to maintain faculty - summer school stipends are deplorable when compared to other places I have worked.

I chose to come to Western because of its excellence and commitment to teaching. But somehow that has been lost in going to meetings and writing reports and position papers. Without students and the teaching WKU would not be here.

31. We may not (don't) need post-tenure review if yearly dept'l evaluations are being administered properly.

Our library must be upgraded.

Faculty travel to other campuses should not be dictated by the desires of the extended campus students. Those campuses need their own faculty, staff, libraries, or the students should spend time at WKU. We should not have to jeopardize our jobs and lives if we don't want to be itinerant professors.

More perks - including health plan with our needs in mind.

We are not respected as much as we should be by the administrators. For instance, the decision to extend our health plan for 6 more months is paternalistic as well as less than honest, to put it mildly.

Student evaluations should not dictate how and what we teach. They should not count for much nor be seen by anyone but the professor and dept. head

I'm tired of weak students who don't want to work expecting "A's". I think we mean business and our students need to realize that this is college, not 13th through 16th grades. Let's spread the word! If we can't we'll lose money\$!?! Get real!

We need a better reserved parking policy determined by people who appreciate the needs of those who have purchased spaces. Policies should not be changed because an administrator says so. Too much of that goes on here. Some things, including the ones I have mentioned, are getting ridiculous.

32. Referring to #3: area of benefits

#9: more should be in benefits

#10: Benefits

33. N=Neutral: This does not make sense within the scale. Your results will likely not be valid for these questions

34. #6: w/the system of evaluation that we have presently

35. #5: as long as Proficient means SATISFACTORY

#7: may be changing

#9: still waiting on this one

#10: based on short term